United Nations E/CN.6/2010/NGO/15

Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
10 December 2009

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-fourth session
1-12 March 2010
Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals

Statement submitted by the International Women's Health Coalition, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

Statement

1. Five years remain to achieve the goals set out in the Declaration and Platform for Action agreed to at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. The Platform for Action provides the foundation needed to achieve the eight Millennium Development Goals. When Governments invest in women and girls and make their health and well-being central to their policies and programmes, they create more just and prosperous societies. The Platform for Action puts the respect and fulfilment of women's human rights, including to their sexual and reproductive health and their reproductive rights, at the centre of international policy.

2. Women's health is one of the pillars of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. At the 2009 session of the Commission on Population and Development,

* E/CN.6/2010/1.

09-64382 (E) 151209

Please recycle

Member States reaffirmed their commitments to achieving universal access to reproductive health (Millennium Development Goal target 5 (b)), recognized the disproportionate vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS and committed themselves to protecting girls and women from HIV through sexual and reproductive health services and education that promotes gender equality. These commitments must be acted upon immediately and reinforced through the Beijing review process.

3. Let us all commit to three core actions in the next five years:

(a) Implementing comprehensive sexual and reproductive health programmes and ensuring that women and adolescents have access to quality and affordable services;

(b) Strengthening health systems to ensure equitable access to these services, as well as health information and sexuality education, particularly for the largest-ever generation of young people;

(c) Investing in policies and programmes and legislative and judiciary actions that give women and girls access to economic resources, skills training and social support and that protect their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence.[1]

4. There is no more important investment to be made: Only healthy women whose human rights are protected can be fully productive workers and effective participants in their country's political processes. Only when women are healthy and empowered can they raise and educate healthy children — these are the building blocks of stable societies and growing economies, and an imperative in their own right.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II, para. 96.